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NJMC Receives First Conservation Plan Update from NJDEP

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission today received details of work on a Meadowlands Wildlife Action Plan from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife.

"The Meadowlands has emerged as an area of important environmental value as well as carefully planned economic growth, and we are dedicated to pursuing a conservation action plan that will map out the best strategic course for this unique region," said NJMC Chair Susan Bass Levin, also the state Department of Community Affairs Commissioner. "By working together and combining the expertise of our conservation community we are continuing the consensus-building of the Master Plan enacted in 2004."

The proposed wildlife action plan sets a course to meet the environmental preservation and enhancement goals outlined in the NJMC's Master Plan. The plan for the Meadowlands District will stand alone from other DEP wildlife action plans for the state of New Jersey because of the complexities of this unique urban oasis. The Meadowlands' conservation plan establishes goals for preventing the destruction of habitat, stewardship and restoration, wildlife management, establishing a government-wide invasive species policy, data and scientific updates, and addressing challenges presented in urban eco-systems.

Organizations contributing to the plan include the NJMC, NJDEP, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Hackensack Riverkeeper, New Jersey Audubon Society, New York/New Jersey Baykeeper, Ducks Unlimited, Meadowlands Conservation Trust, Rutgers University, and other academic and non-government organizations and stakeholders.

"In order to take a comprehensive look at the Meadowlands, we are building a firm foundation of analysis and good data, and getting guidance from those in the field with an understanding of the pressing issues," said NJMC Executive Director Robert Ceberio. "We have already started to act on recommendations in this plan by deploying an NJDEP conservation officer dedicated to the Meadowlands, and we will continue to meet goals and recommendations that will improve the District."

The next steps include releasing a brochure outlining the goals of the plan, initiating studies on contaminants and restoration, seeking funding for small projects and surveys, and continue working with all partners involved for future wildlife-related activities.

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